

On page 3, after line 25, insert the heading:

--DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION--.

IN THE ABSTRACT:

Please add to the application as a separate page following the claims the abstract appended to this paper.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1 to 16, and add new claims 17 to 47:

17. A process for the production of soluble polymer granules suitable as an additive in detergents and/or cleaning compositions, comprising the steps of simultaneously granulating and drying, in a fluidized bed dryer having a diffusor plate, a water-based preparation comprising at least 30% by weight of one or more soluble polymers, in which dryer one or more air inlets above the diffusor plate produce an eddy flow in the bed about the vertical axis of the dryer.

18. The process of claim 17, carried out in a round fluidized bed dryer having an additional air supply system disposed above the diffusor plate, said air supply system having at least two air injection tubes arranged at a uniform distance apart and at the same level above the diffusor at an angle of incidence α of at least 30° and at most 90°.

19. The process of claim 18, wherein the air injection tubes are situated above the diffusor plate at a maximum of 50% of the resting height of the bed material.

20. The process of claim 19, wherein the air injection tubes are situated above the diffusor plate at a maximum of 10% to 30% of the resting height of the bed material.

21. The process of claim 18, wherein the additional air supply system comprises more than two air injection tubes.

22. The process of claim 21, wherein the additional air supply system comprises more than four air injection tubes.

23. The process of claim 18, wherein the angle of incidence of the injection tubes is 30° to 75°.

24. The process of claim 23, wherein the angle of incidence of the injection tubes is 45° to 70°.

25. The process of claim 24, wherein the angle of incidence of the injection tubes is 60°.

26. The process of claim 17, wherein the one or more soluble polymers comprise one or more polymeric polycarboxylates.

27. The process of claim 26, wherein the one or more polymeric polycarboxylates comprise one or more homopolymers or copolymers of acrylic, methacrylic, or maleic acid or water-soluble salts of these polymers.

28. The process of claim 27, wherein the one or more polymeric polycarboxylates have a molecular weight of 500 to 100,000 g/mol.

29. The process of claim 17, wherein the one or more soluble polymers comprise one or more homopolymers or

05930730-043001

A2

30. The process of claim 29, wherein the one or more homopolymers or copolymers of vinyl pyrrolidone have a molecular weight of 1000 to 100,000 g/mol.

32. The process of claim 31, wherein the one or more dextrins are introduced into the dryer in solid form.

34. The process of claim 17, wherein one or more inorganic carrier materials are admixed with the water-based preparation.

35. The process of claim 34, wherein the one or more inorganic carrier materials comprise one or more of sodium sulfate, sodium carbonate, or zeolites.

36. Soluble polymer granules suitable as an additive in detergents and/or cleaning compositions, comprising generally spherical granules containing 50% to 95% by weight of one or more soluble polymers and at least one admixing component.

37. The soluble polymer granules of claim 36, wherein the one or more soluble polymers comprise one or more polymeric

polycarboxylates.

38. The soluble polymer granules of claim 37, wherein the one or more polymeric polycarboxylates comprise one or more homopolymers or copolymers of acrylic, methacrylic, or maleic acid or water-soluble salts of these polymers.

39. The soluble polymer granules of claim 38, wherein the one or more polymeric polycarboxylates have a molecular weight of 500 to 100,000 g/mol.

40. The soluble polymer granules of claim 36, wherein the one or more soluble polymers comprise one or more homopolymers or copolymers of vinyl pyrrolidone having a molecular weight of 1000 to 200,000 g/mol.

41. The soluble polymer granules of claim 40, wherein the one or more homopolymers or copolymers of vinyl pyrrolidone have a molecular weight of 1000 to 100,000 g/mol.

42. The soluble polymer granules of claim 37, comprising one or more dextrans.

43. The soluble polymer granules of claim 42, wherein the weight ratio of dextrin to polymeric polycarboxylate in the granules is 4:1 to 1:2.

44. The soluble polymer granules of claim 36, comprising less than 40% by weight of the at least one admixing component, wherein the at least one admixing component comprises one or more inorganic carrier materials.

45. The soluble polymer granules of claim 44, wherein the one or more inorganic carrier materials comprise sodium sulfate, sodium carbonate, sodium citrate, or zeolites.

09330730-04300
T00E40-0E40E860

A2